

for SASLC

Genesis (Old Saxon).

- A. (none)
- B. (none)
- C. GenB (A 1.1)
- D. (none)
- E. (none)

The OS Genesis (Vat. Pal. Lat. 1447), the existence of which was proposed by Sievers (GR 3689) and proven by Zangemeister (1894), represents a witness to the only vernacular text from which a surviving OE translation or transliteration was made. Of the three OS fragments, one section comprising 26 lines parallels ll. 790-817 of GenB (GR 3692 [9th ed 1984] pp 240-43). Doane (1991) speculates that the OS Genesis may have been given by Charles the Bald to Aethelwulf at the latter's marriage to Charles' daughter Judith in 856, then donated to Canterbury, whence it was retrieved ca 900 to fill in narrative gaps in the ancestor of GenA. Scholars have reached no firm consensus as to the process by which the OS poem was reworked into a West Saxon version, with Capek (GR 3785), for example, favoring the agency of a Continental Saxon translator, and Doane (1991) arguing for a more gradual process of revision by AS hands. In either case, the OS Genesis provides a mid- to late-9C terminus a quo for GenB and a rare second copy against which to compare 27 OE poetic lines.

No single source has been located for the narrative details of the OS Genesis, but scholars have proposed Latin (GR 3742, 3763, 3764, 3779, Robinson [1906], Hill [1984]), Hebrew (GR 3772), and Irish (Murdoch [1973]) sources for various portions of GenB, and thus, by implication, for the OS poem as well. Unless and until a comprehensive source is discovered for the often eclectic narrative, interpreters of the OS and OE poems will continue to read them as repositories of arcane lore, on the one hand, or on the other, as reflections of Germanic and Carolingian perceptions regarding the fall of man.

For further discussions, see: GR 3690, 3693, 3695 (2nd ed 1954), 3733, 3745, 3747, 3776.

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